

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as indicated. A complete set of the claims is included below, reflecting added subject matter (underlining) and deleted subject matter (~~strikethrough~~), as well as the current status of each claim. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) A method for directing and exchanging on-line and off-line communications under control of a ~~traffic~~ control system to accomplish transactions that relate to merchandise or a service available for purchase, the method involving selectively interfacing a video storage device storing video data for one or more vendors with buyers located at widely distributed remote locations, the method using video communication structures and ~~with~~ a capability to electronically communicate through a communication system that is shared by users including the buyers, comprising the steps of:

interfacing the buyers with the ~~traffic~~ control system comprising one or more processors in communication with one or more vendors, through the video communication structures and the communication system wherein certain buyers electronically communicate with the ~~traffic~~ control system via ~~lines~~ links of the communication system;

receiving request data to initiate a transaction ~~at~~ with the ~~traffic~~ control system wherein the request data is entered by an interfaced buyer to indicate an area of interest concerning the merchandise or the service ~~available for purchase~~ and including an indication of ~~an maximum amount at any instance offered by~~ the interfaced buyer is willing to pay for select merchandise or service, at least certain of the request data also for communication with the video storage device having stored video data relating to a plurality of the one or more different vendors;

receiving identification data at the ~~traffic~~ control system provided by the interfaced buyer;

storing at least a part of the request data from the interfaced buyer at the ~~traffic~~ control system and using at least a part of it to selectively obtain proposed data at least in part from the video storage device having stored video data relating to the ~~different one~~ or more vendors and responsive to the interfaced buyer's request data;

as part of said proposed data selectively displaying stored video data from said video storage device as well as graphic data including text at a video communication structure at the remote location used by said interfaced buyer to allow the interfaced buyer to view the video data and the graphic data relating to the request data prior to making a purchase; and

also storing at the ~~traffic~~ control system, a record of ~~for each buyer relating to~~ transaction communications with the interfaced ~~buyers~~ buyer and facilitating communication with the interfaced buyer regarding transaction communications via electronic mail.

18. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, wherein the capability to electronically communicate through the communication system includes a capability to generate a communication.

19. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, wherein the request data from the interfaced buyer includes data to facilitate subsequent electronic communication and wherein the method further comprises the step of:

downloading additional data relating to the area of interest to the interfaced buyer's video communication structure by subsequent electronic communication, after the interface between the interfaced buyer and ~~traffic~~ the control system is terminated.

20. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19, wherein the additional data indicates that a presentation including video data related to an indicated area of interest is available at the ~~traffic~~ control system.

21. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, wherein the step of interfacing is accomplished over ISDN lines.

22. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19, further comprising the step of:

identifying the video communication structures used by the certain buyers based upon automatically provided incoming data signals.

23. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 22, wherein the incoming data signals are ~~MIN~~ automatic number identification signals .

24. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

facilitating access by the certain buyers to various different vendors of the one or more vendors under control of the ~~traffic~~ control system wherein each vendor has a video storage device for storing video data.

25. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

utilizing a clock to limit and control the time during which an offering ~~by for a vendor~~ particular one of the one or more vendors includes ~~including~~ provision of video data to the interfaced buyer ~~is made~~ under control of the ~~traffic~~ control system.

26. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 25, further comprising the step of:

monitoring time limitations with the clock.

27. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, wherein the stored video data includes a graphical display including text of pertinent data associated with a particular vendor of the one or more vendors.

28. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 27, further comprising the step of:

registering the buyers or vendors or both ~~in with the traffic control system~~ prior to facilitating at least certain electronic communications.

29. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 28, wherein the registering step requires the certain buyers or the one or more vendors or both to provide their names.

30. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 28, wherein the registering step requires the certain buyers or the one or more vendors or both, to provide data to facilitate subsequent electronic communications.

31. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 28, wherein the registering step requires the buyers or the vendors or both to provide their telephone numbers or other data to facilitate electronic mail communication.

32. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

requiring the certain buyers to provide identification data prior to allowing the certain buyers access to at least certain stored video data associated with any ~~vendor~~ one of the one or more vendors.

33. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

storing one or more video images as part of the stored video data relating to a particular vendor of the one or more vendors, at the video storage device located at a vendor site.

34. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

storing the video data from ~~a plurality of different~~ the one or more vendors at the video storage device that is located at a site associated with the ~~traffic control system~~.

35. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 34, wherein the ~~traffic~~ control system has a data file including a list of merchandise or service codes.

36. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

offering the certain buyers various choices as part of the proposed data associated with a vendor, as related to the area of interest indicated by the interfaced buyer.

37. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

including within the area of interest, data on specific merchandise or service that a buyer is interested in purchasing identified by merchandise or service codes.

38. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, wherein a particular vendor of the one or more vendors notifies the certain buyers via the ~~traffic~~ control system of discounted merchandise available for purchase after the initiated transaction.

39. (Canceled)

40. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim ~~37~~39, wherein the specific merchandise is a tangible good.

41. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 37, wherein the interfaced buyer consummates a sale of the specific merchandise or service.

42. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 37, wherein the interfaced buyer provides billing information for a purchase transaction.

43. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

providing an identification number that identifies the transaction to a buyer.

44. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 43, wherein the identification number is provided during the interface facilitated under control of the ~~traffic~~ control system.

45. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 43, wherein the identification number is provided with the indication of confirmation after the interface facilitated under control of the ~~traffic~~ control system is terminated.

46. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 17, wherein communications to accomplish the transaction include transmission of audio data.

47. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 17, wherein the stored video data includes high resolution still images.

48. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:
providing a graphical display including text data associated with the interfaced buyer via the ~~traffic~~ control system.

49. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, wherein the ~~traffic~~ control system stores data to facilitate communication between different business entities of which the buyers and vendor are representatives.

50. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:
maintaining at the ~~traffic~~ control system, a record of prior transactions with buyers and charges associated with the prior transactions.

51. (Canceled)

52. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:
registering buyers with the ~~traffic~~ control system and during the registration step, designating an identification number data for use in subsequent electronic communications.
53. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 52, further comprising the step of:
providing a check digit as part of the identification data ~~number~~.
54. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:
facilitating on-line communication between the buyers and the ~~traffic~~ control system via an on-line ~~computer~~ service.
55. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 54, further comprising the step of:
connecting the certain buyers with the ~~traffic~~ control system using an autodialing operation.
56. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 54, further comprising the step of:
maintaining a record of various buyers accessing the ~~traffic~~ control system.
57. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 56, further comprising the step of:
also maintaining a record of the amount of time individual buyers spend viewing the stored video data at the video storage device.
58. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

obtaining data through the ~~traffic~~ control system on buyer reactions to an offer associated with select stored video data viewed by the buyers.

59. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

offering to the buyers various selections relating to an area of interest indicated by the buyers.

60. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

associating one or more sites with the buyers; and
requiring the one or more vendors to register with the ~~traffic~~ control system to entitle access to one or more sites associated with the buyers by providing information relating to the one or more vendors.

61. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 60, wherein the one or more vendors provide name data.

62. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 60, wherein the one or more vendors provide area of interest data.

63. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 60, wherein the one or more vendors provide a name of a business entity with which each one is associated.

64. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 60, wherein the one or more vendors provide data to facilitate subsequent electronic communication.

65. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 60, wherein the one or more vendors provide telephone number data.

66. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 17, wherein both the buyers and the vendors are associated with separate business entities for communications between the business entities.

67. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 17, wherein the stored video transcriptions are received through transmission via the communication system.